

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/667,845

Examiner

Julian W. Woo

Applicant(s)

SANCOFF ET AL.

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 3/28/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-20.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☒ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☒ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date <u>3/28/05</u> | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Walt Norfleet, Reg. No. 52,078, on October 25, 2006.

2. The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 12, on page 23, line 17, delete "connecting" and in its place, insert – connector--.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: None of the prior art of record, alone or in combination, discloses a connector assembly, a deployer assembly for effecting operation of the connector assembly for joining a graft vessel to an opening in a target vessel, and a method with the connector assembly for joining a graft vessel to an opening in a target vessel, where the connector assembly includes, inter alia, a tubular connector member with a plurality of tines at its distal end extending inwardly toward a central axis of the connector member, a spreader portion comprising a tubular body slidably disposed in the connector member and movable in the connector member to engage the tines and extend the tines in directions outwardly from the central axis, and a seal portion slidably disposed around the connector member. The prior art of record does not disclose that the deployer assembly includes, inter alia, a

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grabber including a elongated tubular member having an open distal end, a side opening, and lugs for locking the connecting member in the grabber; a holder disposed within the grabber and having a side opening adapted for alignment with the grabber side opening; and a pusher disposed in the holder. Also, none of the prior art of record discloses that the method for joining a graft vessel to an opening in a target vessel includes, inter alia, providing a connector assembly having tines at its distal end for supporting an everted end of a graft vessel and a seal portion for exerting distally-directed pressure on a target vessel wall, providing a deployer assembly, attaching the connector assembly to the deployer assembly, extending the graft vessel through the deployer assembly and connector assembly, everting the distal end of the graft vessel upon the tine, and manipulating the deployer assembly to move the connector assembly tines and the everted end of the graft vessel through a target vessel opening and to move the connector assembly seal portion pressure exerting structure into engagement with an exterior wall of the target vessel.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

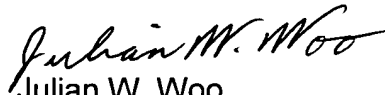
4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Gifford, III et al. (6,491,705), Huxel et al. (6,503,259), and Loshakove et al. (7,063,711) teach connector assemblies.

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5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Julian W. Woo whose telephone number is 571-272-4707. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 6:30-4:00, Alt. Fri. OFF, 6:30-3:00 Fri. IN.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anh Tuan Nguyen can be reached on 571-272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Julian W. Woo
Primary Examiner
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October 22, 2006